DEPARTMENT OF STATE

781

Memorandum of Conversation

TELEPHONE

DATE: June 29, 1954

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador John E. Peurifoy, Guatemala
Assistant Secretary Holland
Ambassador Thomas E. Whelan, Managua
Ambassador Michael J. McDermott, San Salvador
Ambassador Hector David Castro, President of COAS

COPIES TO: The Secretary
General Smith
Mr. Murphy

714.00/6-2954

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At about 3:30 on the afternoon of June 29, Ambassador Peurifoy telephoned me and said that bombings were going on in Zacapa; that they were making it extremely difficult for the present Junta to retain control, and urging that everything possible be done to stop the bombing. I told him of the action we had already taken and assured him that we would do everything else that we could.

Thereupon I telephoned Ambassador Willauer and asked that he send the Embassy plane with an officer of the Embassy, and, if possible, an officer of the Honduran Government to the area of the hostilities in order to try to establish contact with Colonel Castillo Armas, to urge him to suspend hostilities immediately and to accept the invitation to attend a meeting with Colonel Monzon in El Salvador. He said that he would do so immediately.

I then telephoned Ambassador Whelan in Managua and asked that he attempt in collaboration with the Government to arrange for an emissary to attempt to establish contact with Colonel Castillo Armas to achieve the same end. Shortly thereafter he telephoned back and said that such an emissary had been sent.

I telephoned Ambassador McDermott in El Salvador and asked that he renew his attempts to transmit the same message to Colonel Castillo Armas. I also asked that he cause the Government to telephone Ambassador Castro and approve the program outlined in the next paragraph.

I telephoned

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I telephoned Ambassador Castro of El Salvador, the President of the COAS, and asked that he immediately call an extraordinary meeting of the Council in order that I might appear before it and report the overture made by the Junta in Guatemala. I stated that I would advise the Council that we were doing everything possible that we could to comply with the request made upon us; that the reason we were acting ourselves was because of the great urgency that something be done immediately to save lives, but that we would like to feel that we were acting within the scope of the OAS and consistently with its purposes. I urged that he attempt to obtain authorization from his government to join me in such a statement. He agreed that he would do so.

He subsequently advised me that he had called a meeting of the Council for 5:30 in the afternoon. I agreed to attend and make the statement set out above.

I called Ambassador Peurifoy and advised him of all the foregoing. He agreed that he would cause the Junta to submit a note to him inviting the request which I have outlined above and that he would then cable the contents of that note to us in order that we might have a formal request on record.

I urged Ambassador Peurifoy to cause the Junta to attempt to establish contact by radio with Colonel Castillo Armas suggesting to him that he set an hour for cessation of hostilities and that they would suspend their own activities at the hour indicated by him. He said that he understood that the Government was already following this course.

ARA:HFHolland:vk